

BOARD STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT

September 8, 2023



BOARD RETREAT AGENDA — DAY 2

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast
- 8:00 a.m. Call to Order
- Introduction and Objectives
- 8:05 a.m. SWOT Feedback and Discussion
- 9:00 a.m. Confirmation of Strategic Plan Vision, Mission, and Goal Statements
- Discussion of Value Statements
- 10:00 a.m. Break
- 10:15 a.m. Continue Vision, Mission, Goal and Value Statement Discussions
- 11:00 a.m. Strategic Discussion 1: Key 5-yr Activities

BOARD RETREAT AGENDA — DAY 2

- 12:00 p.m. Working Lunch
- 12:30 p.m. Strategic Discussion 2: Appropriate level of buffer supplies in uncertain times
- 1:30 p.m. Break
- 1:45 p.m. Strategic Discussion 3: Financial planning for future challenges
- 2:45 p.m. Summary, Wrap-up, and Next Steps
- 3:00 p.m. Adjourn

DAY 2 INTRODUCTION AND WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

- Frame the top half of the Update to the Strategic Plan
- Consider feedback from the Board interviews and staff SWOT workshops
- Produce draft Vision, Mission, and Goal Statements as direction to staff for development of Goals, Objectives, and KPIs
- Discuss Value statements

STRATEGIC PLANNING CONTEXT



SWOT FEEDBACK

Overview and Discussion of Feedback from SWOT Analysis



BOARD BIG ISSUES

2019 Board Big Issues

- Seamlessly optimize new agency
 - IT Strategy
 - Execute communication strategy
 - Facility optimization
 - Standardize operating procedures
- Maintain supply diversity / resiliency
- Implement the GSA / leverage benefits
- Long Range Finance Plan
- Succession planning / Team building
- Emergency preparedness

2023 Board Big Issues

- Financing infrastructure (cost & budget) (4)
- Water quality and emerging contaminants (4)
- Diversification of water supplies (Bay Delta) (4)
- Climate change (4)
- Board dynamic is mixed (4)
- Keeping Public informed (3)
- Emergency preparedness (2)
- Infrastructure and asset management (2)
- Sustainability (\$, staff, environment)
- Accessibility to water (human right to water)
- Collaboration (inter dept, cities, stakeholders)
- Regulatory mandates
- Need for adaptive management
- Controlling debt
- Multiple statewide groups competing for finite resources
- Continue drive to one agency model

MANAGEMENT BIG ISSUES

- Next rate case in 2024; double digit increases (4)
 - Big capital investments (e.g., Sites, Delta Conveyance, PFAS compliance, and emergency storage)
- Water resources (Recycled water access/SGMA potential to restrict, climate change impact on supply, power, fleet) (4)
- Maintain focus on employees (2)
- Retirement/succession planning (2)
- Water quality (Whitaker Plume, PFAS)
- Workplace consolidation

SWOT THEMES - BOARD

Strengths

- Staff expertise (8)
- Management Team and Supervisors (7)
- Forward thinking agency (4)
- Collaborative (e.g., Eng/Ops) (4)
- Stable/flexible agency (3) with strong culture, and diverse workforce
- Diverse water portfolio (3)
- Financial resiliency and reasonable rates (3)

Weaknesses

- Need clearer communication in board packets (3)
- Succession planning (3)
- Emergency response (2)
- Relatively low use of recycled water and need to accelerate (2)

Opportunities

- Collaborations (LADWP, connect into systems, stakeholder groups) (3)
- Strengthen banking programs expand supplemental water sources (e.g., recycled water and stormwater) (2)
- Employee development (e.g., Deputy backups) (2)
- School education programs
- Energy generation (e.g., recovering system pressure) (2)
- Communicate costs (e.g., reg costs) (2)

Threats

- Climate whiplash of drought/flood and groundwater vulnerability (2)
- Natural disaster impacts (e.g., earthquake, fires, etc.) (2)
- Regulatory mandates (e.g., water conservation) (2)
- Cyber security (2)
- Retirement of expertise and knowledgeable employees (2)

SWOT THEMES — MANAGEMENT TEAM

Strengths

- Diversified water supply (7)
- Good culture/attractive place to work (pay & benefits) (7)
- Good employee engagement, collaboration, & retention (6)
- Expertise and knowledge (4)
- Strong management team making informed decisions and effective strategies (3)
- PFAS supply and treatment fast-track (2)
- Being one agency is a big strength; merged great skills (2)

Weaknesses

- Loss of staff/need for succession planning (7)
- Decentralized staff/WFH contributes to silos (6)
- Reactive maintenance (6)
- Need to bridge “Silos of excellence” (e.g., UWMP should provide guidance to the ops plan) (2)
- Consider life-cycle cost in all project evaluations (2)
- Inconsistent performance evals/unclear metrics (2)
- Navigating DEI sensitivities (2)

Opportunities

- Collaboration with agencies and stakeholders (e.g., emergency material exchanges with LADWP) (3)
- Revitalize training program (2)
- Expand Asset Management and incorporate in Master Plan (2)

Threats

- Uncertain future regulatory environment (3)
- Climate change/drought (2)

SWOT THEMES - SUPERVISORS

Strengths (105)

- Knowledgeable Employees (15)
- Work culture (13)
- Capable. pro-employee and friendly management (8)
- Benefits (6)
- Ability to reassess, adapt, and be creative (5)
- Availability of resources (5)
- Flexible work schedules (hybrid, 9/80 WFH) (4)
- Technology (IT proactive/responsive) (4)
- Encouraged to grow (e.g., conferences, education) (4)

Weaknesses (95)

- Still have legacy divisions (14)
- Communication (interdepartmental) (10)
- Succession planning (loss of institutional knowledge) (10)
- Training program (10)
- Lack of staff (morale, PM staff, timely hiring) (10)
- Aging infrastructure (e.g., pipelines/leaks) (6)
- Unclear promotional pathways (staff working above paygrade) (3)

Opportunities (67)

- Partnerships (R&D, consultants, city/counties) (7)
- Integration of dept/staff resources (6)
- Consolidation of facilities (4)
- Tech innovation (treatment leadership (2)) (4)
- Look at efficiencies in workflows (4)
- IT opportunities (4)
- Training (Supervisor, technology, ethics) (3)
- Better communication among departments (3)

Threats (91)

- Need for workforce development (21)
- Natural disasters/prep (fire, earthquake) (7)
- New regs (8)
- Aging infrastructure (4)
- New electric vehicle laws (3)
- Drought (3)
- Resource loss/sustainability (3)
- Increase in population/development (3)

SWOT THEMES - STAFF

Strengths (386)

- Staff (62)
- Career advancement (9) and training (26)
- Benefits (32) and compensation (11)
- Available resources (32)
- Training/development/education (26)
- Experience/leadership/vision/direction (19)
- Work life balance/flexibility (25)
- Experience/leadership (19)
- Innovative solutions (13)
- Communication (12)
- Computer and technology equipment/ software (10)
- Commitment to safety (7)
- Safety (7)
- Board/supervisor support for our programs is great (6)
- Customer service (6)

SWOT THEMES - STAFF

Weaknesses -368

- Consistent/timely communication/accountability between depts (26)
- Institutional knowledge loss (20)
- Need for more staff (20)
- Clear pathway for growth (15)
- Training program (15)
- Workforce flexibility (14)
- Hiring process (12)
- Aging infrastructure (more staff, main breaks) (12)
- Equipment/Tools (10)
- Lack of dept cohesiveness and accountability (9)
- Some lack of direction/vision (7)
- Workload distribution (6)
- Low employee morale/motivation (5)
- Benefits (5)
- Micromanagement (5)
- Too frequent changing of passwords (5)
- Some inconsistent processes (4)

SWOT THEMES - STAFF

Opportunities (190)

- Training and education (Oracle, IT apps, procedures) (17)
- New technology/automation (13)
- Standardization (11)
- Better workflow/streamlining of processes (8)
- Offering additional schedule options/switch to 4/10 (8)
- Cross training (6)
- Consolidate /databases to improve access (4)
- Have a clear path to growth (4)
- Anonymous suggestion box (4)
- Safety (4)

SWOT THEMES - STAFF

Threats (248)

- Heavy workload (growth, turnover, retirement, burnout) (32)
- Water quality and regs- PFAS , perchlorate, etc. (30)
- Emergency training and planning (18)
- Drought (climate change) (15)
- Cyber attack (ransomware, SCADA) (8)
- Increased demand outgrowing capability (7)
- Security (6)
- Political turbulence (internal and external) (6)
- Management defending bad supervisor behaviour (5)
- Some supervisors lacking proper training, certification, or degree (4)
- Favoritism (4)
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion (3)
- Toxic culture internal depts (3)
- Managers (top heavy, inconsistent application of policy) (3)
- Disgruntled customers (3)
- Increased demand outgrowing capability (3)

BOARD RETREAT AGENDA — DAY 2

7:30 a.m. Breakfast

8:00 a.m. Call to Order

- Introduction and Objectives

8:05 a.m. SWOT Feedback and Discussion

9:00 a.m. **Confirmation of Strategic Plan Vision, Mission, and Goal Statements**

- **Discussion of Value Statements**

10:00 a.m. Break

10:15 a.m. Continue Vision, Mission, Goal and Value Statement Discussions

11:00 a.m. Strategic Discussion 1: Key 5-yr Activities

BOARD VISION FEEDBACK

“Exemplary water management for a high quality of life in the Santa Clarita Valley.

- Comment - add **all life, present and future**
- Comment - add at end: **now and for future generations**

BOARD VISION/MISSION FEEDBACK

“Providing responsible water stewardship to ensure the Santa Clarita Valley has reliable supplies of high quality water at a reasonable cost.”

- Comment – delete “high quality” and replace with **safe**
- Comment - Replace “reasonable” with **affordable**

BOARD GOALS

Goal A – *Exceptional Customer Service and Stakeholder Engagement* – ~~Customer/Community~~ *Advocate*, implement and communicate policies supporting the social, quality of life, and environmental values of the community.

- Comment: *maintain a high level of customer satisfaction through policies, programs, and contacts that help meet customers needs and through community engagement.*

BOARD GOALS, CONT'D

Goal B – **Reliable** Infrastructure ~~Reliability~~ – Implement, operate, and maintain water infrastructure to ensure sustainable water service provision.

BOARD GOALS, CONT'D

Goal C – **Sustainable Resources and** ~~Water Supply and Resource~~
~~Sustainability~~ – Implement programs to ensure the service area has reliable supplies of water.

BOARD GOALS, CONT'D

Goal D – **High** Water Quality and Environmental Compliance: Protect the quality of our water supplies and ensure our drinking water meets or surpasses all water quality requirements.

BOARD GOALS, CONT'D

Goal E - Financial Resiliency: Maintain a long-range, transparent, stable, and well-planned financial condition, resulting in current and future water users receiving fair and equitable rates and charges.

BOARD GOALS, CONT'D

Goal F – *A* High Performance Team – *Attract and retain quality staff members and* grow a culture of continuous improvement that fosters SCV Water's values.

BOARD GOALS — POTENTIAL NEW GOALS

Environmental Stewardship – *We commit to environmentally friendly and sustainable policies, projects and practices.*

- Comment: Bring in SGMA, watershed management, environmental compliance

Safety and Security – *We maintain the physical safety of employees and secure the agency's physical and cyber resources.*

Efficiency Through Technology – *We Identify and use technology to improve the operations of the agency.*

OBSERVATIONS ON VALUES

- They need to be simplified
- Need more staff input on these shared values
- Communicate them more internally
- Initiate board discussion on them today – to be continued

BOARD COMMENTS ON VALUES

Excellence - We strive to exceed customer expectations and deliver extraordinary service while providing a reliable, safe water supply at an affordable cost.

Consider – We exceed customer expectations and deliver extraordinary service at a reasonable cost.

BOARD COMMENTS ON VALUES

Safety - We prioritize creating and maintaining healthy, secure conditions at our facilities and in the community by adhering to safety policies and procedures and by offering technical and preventative training to our workforce.

Consider – Safety and Security - We maintain a healthy and secure work environment.

BOARD COMMENTS ON VALUES

Innovation - We are industry leaders who embrace change by finding sustainable, pioneering solutions to challenges and continuing to learn and grow in all we do.

Consider – Innovation: “We are industry leaders who embrace change by seeking pioneering solutions and growing our knowledge.”

BOARD COMMENTS ON VALUES

Professionalism - We maintain a diverse team of highly skilled employees who are devoted to honest, courteous and accountable business practices and take their role and stewards of our resources seriously and with humility.

- Comment: add *high standards*
- Some overlap between Integrity and professionalism

Consider – Professionalism – We are a diverse, highly skilled team that relentlessly and with humility pursues excellence as stewards of our resources.

BOARD COMMENTS ON VALUES

Trust - We are dedicated to partnering with community stakeholders to pursue responsible long- term management of water resources that effectively enhance quality of life and further the agency's mission and duty to be stewards of the water supply.

My observation:

- Trust needs to focus inward as well

Consider – Trust – We act in a fashion that builds trust

BOARD COMMENTS ON VALUES

Potential **Inclusion** value – *We maintain an inclusive culture that is characterized by civility, respect, and consideration of all viewpoints and reflects the community we serve*

Comment: “Advancing policies and practices that foster an inclusive working environment and culturally responsible services to meet the diverse needs of the community”

BOARD VALUES FEEDBACK

Potential “Stewardship” value – *“We will protect and enhance the natural resources in our care”*

BOARD RETREAT AGENDA — DAY 2

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast
- 8:00 a.m. Call to Order
- Introduction and Objectives
- 8:05 a.m. SWOT Feedback and Discussion
- 9:00 a.m. Confirmation of Strategic Plan Vision, Mission, and Goal Statements
- Discussion of Value Statements
- 10:00 a.m. Break
- 10:15 a.m. Continue Vision, Mission, Goal and Value Statement Discussions
- 11:00 a.m. Strategic Discussion 1: Key 5-yr Activities**

POTENTIAL INITIATIVES

- Rate increase
- Emergency preparedness
- GIS Platform
- Asset management program
- Data access (data warehouse, governance)
- Workforce development/Succession planning
- Water Supply Portfolio Investments (Delta alternative strategy)
- System Investments
- System emergency storage
- Electrification
- Water Quality

Working Lunch



BOARD RETREAT AGENDA — DAY 2

- 12:00 p.m. Working Lunch
- 12:30 p.m. Strategic Discussion 2: Appropriate level of buffer supplies in uncertain times**
- 1:30 p.m. Break
- 1:45 p.m. Strategic Discussion 3: Financial planning for future challenges
- 2:45 p.m. Summary, Wrap-up, and Next Steps
- 3:00 p.m. Adjourn

BOARD RETREAT AGENDA — DAY 2

- 12:00 p.m. Working Lunch
- 12:30 p.m. Strategic Discussion 2: Appropriate level of buffer supplies in uncertain times
- 1:30 p.m. Break
- 1:45 p.m. Strategic Discussion 3: Financial planning for future challenges**
- 2:45 p.m. Summary, Wrap-up, and Next Steps
- 3:00 p.m. Adjourn

SUMMARY, WRAP-UP, AND NEXT STEPS

- Kickoff/scoping w/management team
- Board kickoff meeting
- Board Interviews
- SWOT – Staff / Supervisors / Management (Oct/Nov 2018)
- Management team review of SWOT – Aug 21
- Staff all-hands meeting – Sept 18
- Public session – Late Sept/Early Oct (Board meeting or public focused session?)
- Board 1.5 day retreat (January 25 & 26) – feedback / discuss key planning issues
- Workshop - Management team on strategies and objectives
- Draft plan (Feb/Mar)
- Board meeting (April)

Adjourn

